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1.

SELECTION OF STUDENTS

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2.

Student candidates were screened on a point basis. If his background revealed any religious affiliation, however small, he was disqualified. If he passed this first obstacle, he was then investigated to determine if he had some connection, family or otherwise, with persons who belonged to the old Czarist ruling or intellectual classes. A relationship to anyone who had been in banking, commerce or manufacturing would appreciably lessen his chances. Next, he was tested on the number of Communist-sponsored youth organizations he had joined, such as the Communist Pioneers and the KOMSOMOL (Committee of Soviet Youth). If he had been very active in such organizations his chances for selection were much improved. If he had neglected them altogether his chances were lessened. The final point in selection was an entrance examination to prove his fitness for higher education. Good Communists, or those with Communist connection could get by this examination with poor grades. Others had to pass with a grade of fair or better.

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3.

The decision was made by the Direction (Governing Board) of the university. The direction always took into consideration the recommendation of the examining professor but was not always guided by it. In 1941 rigid

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priorities were exercised in the assignment of students for higher studies. The best students were first offered to the department of Electrotechnical engineering, after that to Mechanical engineering. Civil engineering came next and at the bottom of the priority list was Chemistry which usually received the least apt of 50X1 students.

4.

These methods were standard throughout the USSR. [redacted] most of the large universities in the USSR and found the methods were the same every where.

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5.

His choice was limited to the institutions nearest his home. If he wished to go to a more distant place he would first have to get permission from what was then known as the NKVD. No one could leave his native bailiwick without such permission.

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TEXTBOOKS

6.

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Textbooks were either those translated to the Russian from a foreign tongue or those composed and written by Russians. Translations were most frequently used and probably the only ones of good quality. Russian texts were in small supply and usually weak in quality. Actually, the Soviets chose the best texts from the world's available libraries and had them translated into Russian. Most were German authored and these were cheap and in good supply. The basic text books in Chemistry at the University of Kiev, [redacted] all other Soviet Universities, were:

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Inorganische Chemie by Richter -- German
 Basis of Chemistry by Mendelejar -- Russian
 Inorganische Chemie by Erdmann -- German
 Inorganische Chemie by Hollemann -- German
 Analytical Chemistry by Treadwell -- US
 Analytical Chemistry by Nagy -- US

You will note that only one of these books is by a Soviet author and that half are by Germans. Most translated textbooks contained many errors but those that were translated in Germany by Russian language experts were excellent.

PRESENTATION OF COURSES

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7.

Students attended large lecture courses given by a professor and the lectures were discussed in seminar groups of 30 to 40 students under the supervision of an assistant professor. Classes started at seven-thirty a.m. and ended at ten p.m., with a one hour break for lunch and a small break at the dinner hour. This regime was in effect six days a week.

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8.

four hours of lecture courses, two hours of group seminars and four hours of analytical laboratory work per week were devoted to Chemistry by students majoring in this field. In addition students would spend every available free moment in the laboratory, but there were precious few free moments.

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9.

Individual instruction was forbidden. However, a good Communist student who was doing poorly in his studies could usually "arrange" for "voluntary help" from one of the professors after lecture hours.

10.

The inclination was for great informality between professor and student and between fellow professors but the student feared the professor and the professor feared the student, on political grounds, of course, and this made for a strained relationship that amounted to formality. The same was true as between fellow professors.

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11.

He would be required to put in six hundred hours in Inorganic Chemistry, about half of which would be analytical; four hundred hours in Organic Chemistry; one hundred hours in Physical Chemistry; and about three hundred hours in Physics.

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LABORATORY INSTRUCTION

12.

Laboratory instruction was given to groups of 24 to 36 students at a time. They were required to put in about four hours each week in laboratory work. Graduate assistants supervised the work and advised the students to the extent that they were able. The equipment used was pitifully out of date. Most of it was a hangover from the old Czarist days. From 18 to 24 laboratory problems were given to the students over a two year period.

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EXAMINATIONS

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13.

At the University of Kiev a combined oral and written examination. The student was required to prepare written answers to a set of questions submitted to him by his professor. The professor, in turn would orally examine the student on the basis of the answers he submitted in writing. Students were orally examined after each laboratory problem so there were no laboratory problems in the final examination. The lecture course usually ran from one to one and a half years. A final examination was given at the end of each. In the early days of the Communist regime the old Czarist system of grading, i.e., "very good", "good", "fair" and "unsatisfactory". Later a numerical system was introduced with the highest grade starting at "5", which was equal to "very good" and descending to "1". This latter grade was the professors indication that the student was not suited to continue in university work.

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THESIS

14.

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Each student was given a project (thesis) which had to be completed prior to graduation and defended in public. Projects were assigned by the faculty but were not required to be published unless the student were seeking a postgraduate degree. Upon completion of the project it was submitted to the faculty which decided whether or not it was worth defending. If it was, defense of the project was made before an open commission to which everyone interested in the particular science had the right to come. A special committee made up of university faculty members and outside professors sat in judgement of the defense. If a student failed in his defense he was given the choice of accepting a second class diploma which qualified him as a technician, or applying for the privilege of extending his studies and making a second try in the future.

REQUIREMENT FOR GRADUATION

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15.

The student had to receive about five thousand hours of instruction over a period of five years, pass all of his courses with a grade of fair or better and successfully defend a project (thesis) with a grade of fair or better.

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16.

There were never any failures in the final examinations. Substandard students were weeded out before they reached the finals. However, there was about a 20 per cent factor in incompletions, i.e., students who voluntarily resigned or who were dismissed because of poor work.

ASSIGNMENT OF GRADUATES

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17.

The area of assignment was unlimited. It would depend on where trained men were most needed. This decision was made in Moscow and the student had no choice in the matter. There was no such thing as going jobless. Every successful graduate was needed and there was always a job waiting to be filled.

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18.

After the university the student could go on to the scientific institutes which were attached to the Academies of Science. A student properly recommended by his faculty could matriculate one of these institutes as an "Aspirant" for a professorship in his chosen field.

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